

## Respectfully to the Owners of Texas Peters' Colony Lands.

The question is squarely before you whether or not nomadic and lessee stockmen indefinitely continue in the use of your lands, or the freehold farmer and stockman, not a scattering one, but many succeed them. The former prevent demand and increase of values, even with or without railroads, as fully verified over the block of colony lands between the T. & P. and Texas Central Railroads, only ten miles apart, while the latter create both. This is a favorable year for settlers here. I have worked to introduce them. We united may succeed. We divided, but continue control to the oppositionists, who are united in sentiment and movement to lease and in every way possible embarrass and arrest settlement, who, if unopposed, should next year prove uninviting to movers, may again, for years continue control, and stagnation to business, to sale of lands and development of the country again will prevail in the localities and counties, in the ratio that leaseholds preponderate the freeholds. I have received a letter from Messrs. Webb & Hill. They signify it probable to address you a circular letter. They misquoted me, and lest by accident might again do so, or so briefly quote me as to give you wrong impressions, I give a true copy of my answer to their letter as follows:

Graham, Texas, Aug. 22, 1889.

Messrs. Webb & Hill, Albany, Texas:

GENTS: In reply to yours 17th inst. You say: "A very prominent Banker of Louisville has written us that you are out with a circular letter concerning the injury to lands by leasing them."

The Banker or yourselves misquoted me. Its tenor is, that leasing, in some cases excepted, is against the interest of COLONY owners, and ruinous to tracts used for headquarter and penning purposes; in substance, my opinion, as heretofore expressed to you and other agents.

Again, you say: "We have no Colony lands of our own to sell, and we can write from a disinterested stand-point."

True, I own Colony tracts scattered among those owned by others, and theirs with my own, so that our interests are about the same, inseparable and mutual, and therefore whatever confers or prevents most security and benefits mutually, accordingly is the result to each separate interest, thereby fully disproving your insinuation.

You say: "We did not see, until a few days since, one of your land circulars in which you caution people to beware of any one claiming to represent any of the Colony lands, as they state what is untrue." You have misquoted again. The clause reads: "Beware of those who may FALSELY claim to be agents, \* \* \* and other deceptive practices with purpose to defeat your choice or have you locate elsewhere, or buy other lands,"—as shown in the several editions in aggregate many tens of thousands, distributed at the World's Exposition at New Orleans, and since throughout the older States, at the late Dallas Fair, and Fort Worth Spring Palace exhibit, and through the Farmers Alliances, and by other means; especially in the older counties of the State, so that (to my knowledge) many, and no doubt a large percentage of the prospectors to your county have copies.

Your statement: "We are the only agents in this county who have sold any of these lands—some twenty tracts in over two years," is gratifying, but you do not state how many of them were re-sales, that had been sold and in pastures.

It is unnecessary for me to further quote from your letter—which does you no credit, and the case with several of the VERY MANY from you, which invariably I answered respectfully. Your reflections on me arise from no proper cause, but apparently only because I did not dismiss my arrangement with Judge Fisher and transact all my business there through you—purely a business matter with me, uninfluenced by the personal differences and ill-feeling between you and him, the character of which I am not aware, and only know that his friends speak well of him, as do yours of you; nor have I heard them disparage either of you. His Agency for me all along, as with my other local agents elsewhere, has been to look after and show tracts of land to buyers and name prices, but their values fixed only by respective owners and myself.

Your reflections and insinuations in previous and in this last letter, requires me to inform you that this concludes our correspondence.

Respectfully,

E. S. GRAHAM.

Several, if not all of their letters to Colony land owners for leases, which have been sent me, emphasize the protection of timber as one good reason for leasing, when in fact, except mesquite brush, a large majority of the tracts in that region are prairie, and most of these that were timbered were denuded of it when Ft. Griffin was a military post many years ago; since, there has been more or less cutting of timber, as is the case over the State, and to prevent it has cost me much more trouble and expense than any one else. Since 1876 I alone have openly opposed those against your interest. I can show a list of four pages of foolscap paper of squatters that in two years time I ejected, at my own expense. Then had I had your united support, these lands long ago would have had at least a creditable READY value, but as in the past, even yet the case, should a sale be desired, or of necessity have to be made of a lot of ten, twenty, fifty or more tracts, it is difficult to do so even at very low figures, ought to convince you that in proportion that I have not had your support, your influence and aid has been thrown against your interest, and indeed doubly strengthened oppositional influences.

I trust you will carefully consider the situation and to enable a better command of the conditions to promote your interest, more solidly stand either for me or some one else. Your pleasure I shall cheerfully abide.

I very much regret the necessity for this and my letter of the 6th inst. I feel that I have made no extravagant assertions, or claim for my policy more than the future will bear me out in.

Very truly yours,

E. S. GRAHAM.

Graham, Texas, August 23, 1889.